

# COOPERATION TOWARDS DEVELOPMENT: THE BIASED VALUE OF CULTURE

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«We acknowledge the natural and cultural diversity of the world and recognize that all cultures and civilizations can contribute to, and are crucial enablers of, sustainable development»<sup>1</sup>.

In the two latter years leading to the approval by the United Nations' General Assembly of the Resolution «Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development» the cultural sector advocated for the inclusion of culture as one of the fundamental factors supporting human development worldwide. Unfortunately, the issue of the process and of two years' intensive work, was rather humble.

The story unfolds in several steps.

In May 2013 UNESCO held the International Congress «Culture: Key to Sustainable Development» in Hangzhou, People's Republic of China<sup>2</sup>. Over 400 professionals active in the area of culture and development worldwide attended this major stakeholders' event which was preceded by a brainstorming meeting with the participation of a selected number of experts. Since the Stockholm Conference in 1998<sup>3</sup>, this was the first global forum to discuss the role of culture in sustainable development in view of the UN post-2015 development framework.

During the event, four international organizations<sup>4</sup> agreed to suggest to the UNESCO Secretariat that the Final Declaration<sup>5</sup> of the Congress mention the importance of including culture as a specific goal in the Post-2015 Development Agenda. The four international organizations were: the International Federation of Arts Councils and Culture Agencies – IFACCA; the International Federation of Coalitions for Cultural Diversity – IFCCD; Culture Action Europe – CAE; and, the Culture Committee of United Cities and Local Governments – UCLG. Following the Congress, these four organizations decided to continue advocating, from the professional sector, for the inclusion of culture in the

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